WREKIN
PREP

Use of reasonable force and restrictive interventions policy

Aims

At Wrekin we strive to create a safe, secure and supportive environment for all our pupils and staff.

There are times when the use of restrictive interventions, including reasonable force and seclusion, is lawful and necessary to keep people safe. However, we understand that the use of restrictive interventions can have a significant impact on pupils, staff and parents. In our school, they are only ever considered as a last resort, once all other prevention and de-escalation strategies have been exhausted.

1.Policy Statement

The School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare, dignity, and rights of all pupils. We aim to create a culture in which pupils feel safe, respected, and listened to, and where positive relationships and proactive behaviour support minimise the need for restrictive intervention.

The use of reasonable force or restrictive intervention will only be considered as a last resort, where it is necessary to prevent harm and where all appropriate de-escalation strategies have been exhausted or are judged ineffective in the circumstances.
All actions taken will be lawful, reasonable, proportionate, necessary, and in the best interests of the child.

2. Legal Framework

This policy is informed by:

- *Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE), September 2026*
- Department for Education guidance:
  "Restrictive Interventions, including the Use of Reasonable Force, in Schools" (effective 1 April 2026)
- Section 93 of the *Education and Inspections Act 200*

All members of staff have a legal power to use reasonable force in specific circumstances. This includes permanent staff and any person whom the Head has temporarily placed in charge of pupils.

3. Definitions

- Restrictive interventions are used to prevent, restrict or subdue movement of the body or part of the body. This policy uses 'restrictive interventions' as the umbrella term to describe both physical and non-physical actions aimed to restrain pupils in different ways.

  Examples of restrictive interventions could include:

  - Supervised seclusion of a pupil in an area away from others, where the pupil is prevented from leaving for their own safety and/or the safety of others
  - Passive physical contact, such as a staff member blocking a pupil's path if they're running towards danger (like a busy road), or staff standing between pupils to prevent a fight

- Reasonable force refers to the broad range of actions used by staff that involve a degree of physical contact to restrain children, using no more force than is needed for the least amount of time, the application of which will depend on the circumstances.

  Examples of the use of reasonable force could include:

  - A staff member guiding a pupil to safety by the arm
  - Staff breaking up a fight between pupils
  - A staff member restraining a pupil to prevent injury to the pupil, or others

- Restraint is a form of non-disciplinary intervention which immobilises a pupil or limits their movement. This may or may not include direct physical contact.

  Examples could include:

  - A staff member holding a pupil's arms to their sides when the pupil is attempting to harm themselves or others
  - Removing a pupil's crutches

- Seclusion is a non-disciplinary intervention that keeps a pupil confined to a place away from others and prevents them from leaving, for the safety of that pupil and/or others. This could be through physical obstruction or by making the pupil believe that they will be punished if they leave. For example, putting a pupil into a 'holding' room until they calm down is a form of seclusion.
- A significant incident is any incident where the use of force goes beyond appropriate physical contact between a member of staff and a pupil. This includes when physical force is used to implement a non-physical restrictive intervention.

4. Principles

The School adopts a child centred and trauma informed approach, underpinned by:

- Prevention and early intervention
- De-escalation and effective communication
- Respect for dignity, rights, and personal space
- Use of the least restrictive effective intervention
- Proportionality and necessity
- Safeguarding at all times

Particular care will be taken when supporting pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) or other vulnerabilities.

This policy applies to all children in our setting. Where the policy is applied to children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (aged under five), staff will take account of their developmental stage, attachment and the statutory EYFS welfare and safeguarding requirements. Restrictive interventions will only be used as a last resort to prevent immediate harm, in the least restrictive way possible, and incidents will be recorded, reported to parents and reviewed in line with the School's EYFS and safeguarding procedures.

5. When Reasonable Force May Be Used

Reasonable force may be used to prevent a pupil from:

- Committing a criminal offence
- Injuring themselves or others
- Causing damage to property
- Seriously disrupting good order and discipline

This applies both on school premises and during authorised school activities.

6. Use of Force

Any use of force must:

- Be reasonable, proportionate, and necessary
- Use the least restrictive option available
- Be applied for the shortest possible time
- Cease as soon as the risk has reduced

Staff must always seek to de-escalate situations first, unless there is an immediate risk of harm.

Force must never be used as a punishment.

7. Recording and Reporting

All incidents involving restrictive intervention must be:

- Recorded in writing as soon as possible and no later than the end of the same school day
- Reported to the Head
- Logged and monitored by the Deputy Head (Pastoral)

Parents/carers will be informed without delay, unless there is a clear safeguarding reason not to do so.

8. Post-Incident Support and Review

Following any incident:

- The pupil will be given an opportunity to debrief and reflect in a supportive environment
- The pupil's views will be sought and recorded, where appropriate
- Staff involved will receive appropriate support and opportunity for reflection

The incident will be reviewed to:

- Identify triggers or patterns
- Inform or update behaviour support strategies
- Reduce the likelihood of recurrence

Where a pupil is identified as being at risk of requiring restrictive intervention, the School will implement an individual risk assessment and/or behaviour support plan, developed in partnership with staff, parents/carers, and where appropriate, the pupil.

9. Monitoring and Oversight

The School will:

- Monitor all incidents of restrictive intervention
- Analyse data for patterns, including any disproportionate impact on vulnerable groups (including pupils with SEND)
- Use findings to inform staff training and safeguarding practice

The Governing Body will receive regular reports and will provide oversight, challenge, and support to ensure that practice remains safe, proportionate, and in line with safeguarding expectations.

10. Prohibition of Force as Punishment

The use of force as a punishment is unlawful and is strictly prohibited.

11. Staff Training

All staff receive appropriate training in:

- Behaviour management and de-escalation strategies
- Safeguarding and child protection
- The safe and lawful use of reasonable force

Where appropriate, staff are trained in recognised positive handling approaches.

Training is:

- Regularly refreshed
- Monitored by senior leadership
- Recorded as part of the School's safeguarding compliance procedures

This policy applies to all employees of Wrekin College.